

Guidelines for the FAWQ SOAPBOX Competition

Writers with an axe to grind and wishing to enter this competition should consider W. H. Auden's maxim:

How will I know what I think until I see what I say?

This competition is about **the personal** and **the passion**.

The judges will be looking for:

- how effectively the writer introduces the controversial topic;
- how passionate and persuasive they are, and how well they support their theme (without the use of page notes, end notes or bibliography; however you may cite quotes from media sources, in which case you need to name the source and the date);
- and finally, how convincingly they clinch their argument.

Think of it as your turn to speak at a public forum. Say just what you think, how you feel. Find an attention-grabbing 'hook' that captures the attention of your fantasy audience, then ensure you keep them with you by challenging opinions supported by familiar examples.

This is not a platform for political correctness. Don't apologise for upsetting some of the 'audience' (possibly diluting your point of view).

Support your argument so 'any person in the street can understand'. That is, simply and clearly. (That is why end notes and bibliography won't work; you wouldn't recite those things as part of your speech, would you?)

Further, judges are not looking for a script with presentation directions (e.g. pause for laugh; or wait for heckler's response), just your own words.

Take advantage of the competition word length (1000-2000 words) to create maximum impact for your word limit. (Think: How can I maximise the impact of my view in the words I am allowed?)

Good luck.